



Seattle Human Rights Commission

Established 1963

Resolution #12-4: Elimination of Native American Mascots

Whereas, all Seattle residents are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

Whereas, the Seattle Human Rights Commission is committed to protecting and advocating for justice, human rights, and the equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle; and

Whereas, the United States ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) in October 1994 and Article 7 requires States parties “to adopt immediate and effective measures, particularly in the field of teaching, education, culture and information with a view to combating prejudices which lead to racial discrimination and to promote understanding, tolerance and friendship”; and

Whereas, throughout the United States, public school sports teams use various depictions of Native Americans as mascots, logos, and team names from schools, which Native American tribes and communities have historically challenged on the basis that they are demeaning and offensive; and

Whereas, in 2005 the American Psychological Association and in 2007 the American Sociological Association called for the elimination of Native American mascots because of the harmful effects of racial stereotyping and inaccurate racial portrayals on the social identity development and self-esteem of American Indian students; and

Whereas, on September 26, 2012 the Washington State Board of Education unanimously passed a resolution calling on Washington public schools to end the use of Native American mascots; and

Whereas, in the past decade, ten Washington schools have discontinued the use of Native American mascots, but at least fifty more have not; and

Whereas, Oregon’s State Board of Education voted in May 2012 to ban the use of Native American mascots, nicknames and logos and have directed public schools to comply within five years; and

Whereas, the National Congress of American Indians, the National Indian Education Association, and the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians have called for the elimination of Native American logos, mascots, and team names from schools; and

Whereas, the Seattle Human Rights Commission believes that the elimination of Native American logos, mascots, and team names from schools will reduce prejudices and reverse the harmful effects of racial stereotyping on American Indian students;

Therefore be it resolved, that the Seattle Human Rights Commission hereby declares its support for the Washington State Board of Education’s resolution encouraging public schools to end the use of Native American logos, mascots, and team names, and further calls on the State of Washington to ban the use of Native American logos, mascots, and team names by public schools.

Adopted by the Seattle Human Rights Commission on November 23, 2012

A blue ink signature of Christopher Stearns, written in a cursive style.

Christopher Stearns, Chairman

A blue ink signature of Jennifer Yogi, written in a cursive style.

Jennifer Yogi, Secretary